



Commandant's Strategic Guidance for the Coast Guard Academy

Preamble

The United States Coast Guard Academy is all about learning and leadership and the service's future. The mission of the United States Coast Guard is:

"The United States Coast Guard is a multimissioned maritime service and one of the Nation's five Armed Forces. Its mission is to protect the public, the environment, and U.S. economic interests – in the Nation's ports and waterways, along the coast, on international waters, or in any maritime region as required to support national security."

For the Coast Guard to fulfill its mission, the service continues to invest in one of its strategic assets – the Coast Guard Academy.

This document is intended to guide the Coast Guard Academy and ensure its connectivity to the Coast Guard as we maneuver to meet our long-term vision of the future (e.g., Coast Guard 2020) with attention to vision, excellence, service, teamwork and people.

As the Coast Guard's intellectual resource, the Coast Guard Academy must "stay linked to the Areas of Emphasis, Objectives and Commandant's Imperatives that constitute the Commandant's Direction."

As the wellspring of leadership and character, the Academy fulfills a critical role in setting the standards for integrity and leadership within the service. The Coast Guard's Core Values – Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty – shall be the Academy's watchwords.

As a military service academy, and the sole accession point for officers, the Coast Guard Academy shall ensure our future officer corps is prepared to lead the service through the rocks and shoals of the future, during both war and peace, at home or abroad. Our officers shall be Visionary, Vigilant, and Semper Paratus.

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Institutional Vision and Mission

Expansion	The Academy's Vision and Mission as an Institution is expanding, to include Leadership Development for all communities of Team Coast Guard: Cadets, Officer Candidates, Officers, Chief Warrant Officers, Chief Petty Officers, Petty Officers, Reservists, Civilians, Public Health Service and Auxiliaries.
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Institutional Vision	<p>The Academy's vision, developed by the Superintendent and his staff in August 1997 and revised in January 1999 accurately reflects this change.</p> <p><i>The Academy is the wellspring of leadership and character for the United States Coast Guard. In serving the American public, the Academy is recognized as an exemplary institution and valued as a national asset. To earn that recognition and inspire lifelong learners, we excel in education, professional and military training, and leadership development.</i></p>
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Institutional Mission	<p>The Academy's institutional mission is:</p> <p><i>The United States Coast Guard Academy is committed to strengthening the nation's future by educating, training, and developing leaders of character who are ethically, intellectually, professionally, and physically prepared to serve their country and humanity, and who are strong in their resolve to build on the long military and maritime heritage and proud accomplishments of the United States Coast Guard.</i></p>
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Cadet Program Mission	<p>The cadet program mission is:</p> <p><i>To graduate young men and women with sound bodies, stout hearts, and alert minds, with a liking for the sea and its lore, and with that high sense of honor, loyalty and obedience which goes with trained initiative and leadership; well-grounded in seamanship, the sciences and amenities, and strong in the resolve to be worthy of the traditions of commissioned officers in the United States Coast Guard in the service of their country and humanity.</i></p>
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Leadership Development Center (LDC) Program Mission	<p>The Leadership Development Center mission is:</p> <p><i>The Leadership Development Center improves mission performance and enhances the Coast Guard's investment in its people by preparing them to demonstrate leadership and live the Core Values, by supporting Coast Guard units through service-wide leadership and quality development, and by identifying future organizational needs and requirements through research and assessment.</i></p>
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General Guidance

Board of Trustees	<p>The expansion of the Academy's mission has increased the importance of the Board of Trustees, particularly with respect to validating outcomes and assessing the performance of graduates in the field. Guidance on the specific roles and procedures of the Board is provided elsewhere.</p>
Integration	<p>The Academy shall maximize opportunities to build mutual respect and learning between and among the communities of Team Coast Guard.</p> <p>At the same time, the Academy must be vigilant in preserving the esteem and traditions of each program. None should lose its own valuable traditions or identity or access to the resources and information it needs to accomplish its particular mission.</p>
Accreditation	<p>Consolidating much of our leadership development activity at one command underscores the need for quality in all facets of the Academy's management, faculty and staff, and facilities. The Academy's faculty and staff, and the Service at large, must unite in efforts to build and sustain quality in this institution. Accreditation drives program effectiveness and enhances the Academy and our graduates. It is an exercise in self-examination and in peer review, in which the Academy will discover areas that need improvement in institutional quality and effectiveness. The advantages of accreditation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving public accountability and institutional quality and effectiveness through self-governance. • Maintaining the highest standards for all programs and attracting the very best of America's youth as applicants for admission to the Cadet Program. • Assisting graduates of all schools and programs in their pursuit of admission to subsequent schools such as those granting associate, baccalaureate, and post-graduate degrees. • Providing nationally recognized academic credit for appropriate training and education provided by the institution. <p>The Academy shall maintain appropriate accreditation for all programs under its cognizance.</p>
Institutional Research, Needs Assessments, Needs Analysis, External Evaluations	<p>Institutional Research, Needs Assessments and Analyses are cornerstones of quality workforce management and a mandate for Coast Guard training and education programs, including those at the Coast Guard Academy. They continually align training and education with field needs. External Evaluations and Institutional Research provide continual feedback from the field to the Academy regarding its programs.</p> <p>The Academy shall maximize the contributions of these tools to design and monitor the quality of its programs.</p>
Diversity	<p>Recruit, retain and develop a diverse faculty, staff and students in concert with Workforce 2015 direction on race and gender. Weave Diversity objectives into Academy decision-making processes.</p>

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Leadership Development

Purpose	Leadership Development is an objective common to all Academy programs and schools. Continual learning and effective leadership are essential to mission accomplishment, productivity, public confidence and trust, and employee involvement and well being.
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Leadership Dimensions	Leadership Development activities can be divided into five general, somewhat overlapping dimensions. These dimensions include:
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| • Military/Service | Learning to serve
Embracing a life of service and sacrifice
Commitment to service and the Coast Guard |
| • Character | Making ethical choices
Values and ethics
Spiritual and social
Commitment to others |
| • Intellect | Learning to learn
Critical thinking ability
Knowledge |
| • Professional | Learning to do
Technical and interpersonal skills |
| • Wellness | Choosing to be healthy
Psychological and physical fitness |

This delineation of separate developmental activities helps us understand and design them, but in practice they must work in harmony to be effective. The Academy shall maximize the integration of developmental activities within each of its programs and between them where appropriate.

Shared Learning Outcomes	All Academy programs share several common learning outcomes. To the greatest extent possible, graduates of all Academy programs will meet the following standards, applying appropriate criteria.
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| • Leadership Abilities | Graduates shall be military and civilian leaders of character who understand and apply sound leadership principles and competencies. This includes the ability to direct, develop, and evaluate diverse groups; to function effectively and ethically as a leader, follower, facilitator or member of a team; and to conduct constructive assessment of self and others. |
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Leadership Development, continued**Shared Learning
Outcomes
(continued)**

- **Personal and Professional Qualities**

Graduates shall maintain a professional lifestyle that embraces the Coast Guard Core Values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty, includes physical fitness and wellness, and demonstrates the customs, courtesies and social skills befitting members of a maritime military service. Graduates shall have a sense of Coast Guard maritime heritage and an understanding of the roles that the Coast Guard and the nation play in the global environment.

- **Communication Effectiveness**

Graduates shall be able to write clearly, concisely, persuasively and grammatically; prepare and deliver well-organized and polished oral presentations; read and understand a variety of written materials; listen thoughtfully to oral arguments; respect diverse opinions; and formulate reasoned alternatives and responses.

- **Ability to Acquire, Integrate, and Expand Knowledge**

Graduates shall have developed the motivations and skills for lifelong learning. Graduates shall be able to create a working conceptual framework that lends itself to continued expansion. To accomplish this, graduates shall be able to efficiently access a broad range of information sources, locate and interpret desired data reliably, employ appropriate technology, and integrate knowledge.

Graduating cadets shall also have acquired and integrated the specific in-depth knowledge required of both an academic major and an entry-level professional assignment. Leadership Development Center graduates shall have accomplished all program objectives.

- **Critical Thinking Ability**

Graduates shall be able to accomplish complex tasks in a broad range of contexts by applying the basic skills of critical analysis, systems thinking, quantitative reasoning, risk management, creative problem solving, and value-based decision-making.

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Commissioning Programs

Standards for All Commissioned Officers

The following standards apply to all Coast Guard officers. The Superintendent, with BOT oversight, will implement officer accession programs that deliver graduates who meet these standards.

Military Development. All graduates will maintain a professional military lifestyle that embraces the Coast Guard Core Values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty, and demonstrates the customs, courtesies and social skills required of members of the Armed Forces. Graduates will understand, appreciate, and embody the military philosophy while dedicating themselves to service.

Character Development. Newly commissioned officers will be recognized as compelling models of solid character and demonstrated commitment to the mission and values of the Coast Guard. They will project an image that builds respect and pride in the service. They will meet the moral, social and behavioral standards of commissioned officers in the Coast Guard and be fully adapted to the role of mature, responsible adults.

Intellectual Development. Newly commissioned officers will, with intellectual ability and self-confidence, be able to evaluate accurately the quality of arguments presented by others and formulate well supported opinions of their own when confronted with new ideas. They will also be able to articulate ideas in a clear and convincing manner. They will demonstrate ability and promise for continued development and commitment to life-long learning.

Professional Development. Newly commissioned officers will be able to perform entry-level duties of a junior officer aboard ship, as either a deck watch officer or student engineer, to a standard of competence defined in Commandant's policy. This includes operational, administrative and supervisory duties. Graduating cadets will meet the requirements for a Bachelors Degree.

Wellness. Newly commissioned officers will practice deeply ingrained habits of psychological and physical fitness, understand the principles of healthful living, and serve as effective teachers of these principles and practices to others.

Junior Officer Leadership Outcomes

Newly commissioned officers will be able to function effectively as junior officers in leadership capacities. This means they will be able to develop a plan for accomplishing a complex task requiring the cooperative efforts of others, influence group members to work together effectively, and manage the process to a successful conclusion.

The Superintendent and Headquarters Program Managers, with Board of Trustees oversight, shall adjust and specifically define these development standards in accordance with continuing Needs Assessments of junior officer performance requirements. In meeting these assessed needs, the Academy and Headquarters Program Managers shall account for the differences and similarities between the cadet and officer candidate needs.

Balance

The Academy must strive for balance among all developmental standards: Military Development, Character Development, Intellectual Development, Professional Development and Wellness.

Commissioning Programs, continued

Curriculum

Cadet Program

Because of the nature of CG missions and responsibilities, cadet program graduates require an undergraduate degree in quantitatively oriented studies as well as in the humanities and behavioral sciences.

The Academy must be committed to a core curriculum: a common academic experience that provides broad intellectual perspectives.

The Academy must take great care and be committed to offering its students a major in a specific discipline that contributes most effectively to the current and future needs of the Service. Further, the Academy must recognize that specialization encourages intellectual rigor and is a critical component of a quality academic program.

Co-curricular activities that contribute to the intellectual, military, professional, physical and ethical development of the cadets must complement each other. With a firm footing in technology and liberal arts, the Academy must provide challenging, cost-effective outcomes-oriented curricula focused on active-learning and assessment. The degree represents the result of investments made to produce successful CG officers and to engender an appreciation for life-long learning, leadership, service and ethical practice.

Leadership Development Center (LDC) Program

The LDC is a forum for best practices in leadership and management. Courses are designed and developed around three transition points: accession, promotion or advancement, and job assignment. The cornerstones for all LDC courses are leadership, learning, ethical practice and commitment to service. They instill and reinforce the Coast Guard's Core Values, leadership competencies, and expectations of performance and accountability.

Research and Assessment

In addition to the resident and non-resident classes offered for a diverse student population of officers, enlisted, and civilian personnel, institutional research and assessment strengthen the Academy and the Coast Guard. A talented faculty impart knowledge and skills necessary for individual and unit leadership development. This is accomplished through continuing education, distance learning, and a variety of formal and informal learning opportunities.

Curriculum Management

The Superintendent shall work with Headquarters Program Managers and the Board of Trustees to manage degree and commissioning programs for both cadets and, by selection criteria, Officer Candidates and Direct Commission Officers. Consider the following factors in doing so:

- Officer Needs Assessments
- Post Graduate and Professional requirements of Coast Guard Programs
- Projected demographic profile of prospective officers in coming years
- Program Reviews
- Workforce planning factors

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Commissioning Programs, continued

Diversity

The Academy must strive for greater diversity in all officer accession programs. Implement innovative strategies and best practices to attract, access, retain, and graduate cadets and officer candidates in concert with Workforce 2015 direction on gender and race.

Athletics

Athletics play an important role in attracting, retaining and developing prospective officers, and also serve to address their physical and character needs. The Academy must support a balanced intercollegiate athletics program that conforms to the NCAA Division III philosophy for colleges and universities. The Academy must establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics and physical activities are conducted as an integral part of the educational experience.

Other Considerations

The Name

The meaning of the term *Coast Guard Academy* needs to be clearly communicated. The term applies to the overall institution embracing the cadet program and the Leadership Development Center. The expanded meaning of the 'name' shall be aggressively marketed so all constituencies understand the new role.

Advanced Degrees and other innovative concepts

Because of increasing professional-development demands on newly commissioned officers and continued public scrutiny regarding the nation's service academies, the Coast Guard must continuously consider ideas which would maximize the Coast Guard's return-on-investment from the Academy campus. During the development of this guidance, several ideas were proposed that are deserving of further study including the concept of a Coast Guard War College and the concept of a Coast Guard "University" that expands to include other Coast Guard Training Centers as remote campuses. These ideas and others should be explored as we design the *Academy After Next* to address the professional development needs of Team Coast Guard.



J. M. LOY
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commandant

4/22/99
DATE